DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 304 376 SO 019 708

AUTHOR Armento, Beverly
TITLE Economic Socialization.
PUB DATE 6 Oct 88
NOTE 42p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting on Citizenship for the 21st Century: A National Conference on the Future of Civic Education (Washington, DC, October 5-7, 1988).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Information Analyses (070)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Economic Factors; *Economics; Literature Reviews; Social Environment; Social Influences; *Socialization; *Socioeconomic Influences

ABSTRACT

This paper identifies economic roles in terms of personal and social contexts and defines economic socialization as a life-long, complex, interactional, and multi-disciplinary set of processes that involve the development of ideological beliefs about economic systems and individual roles within an economy. Socialization is influenced by instruction, purposeful shaping and modeling of beliefs and behaviors, and hidden or unconscious messages. The paper provides a literature review concerning socialization of youth in terms of: (1) the family and work; (2) society and work-related expectations; and (3) schools and work. Literature in terms of economic socialization and civic behavior is presented under the topics of: (1) civic action; (2) role-taking; (3) economic knowledge; and (4) problem solving. A 51-item bibliography is included. (JHP)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED304376

ECONOMIC SOCIALIZATION

Beverly Armento
Professor, Social Studies Education
Director, Center for Business &
Economic Education
Georgia State University
October 6, 1988

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
BEVERLY ARMENTO
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

SO 019 708

A paper prepared for Citizenship for the 21st Century: A National Conference on the Future of Civic Education.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

INTRODUCTION

Just what is meant by the term, Economic Socialization?

Socialization itself suggests "the entire set of events and processes by which children acquire the beliefs and behaviors of the particular society and the sub-groups into which they are born" (Liebert, Wicks-Nelson, & Kail, 1986, p. 304).

What beliefs and behaviors are ideally acquired in a democratic society such as ours?

"A society which makes provision for participation in its good of all its members on equal terms and which secures flexible readjustment of its institutions through interaction of the different forms of associated life is in so far democratic. Such a society must have a type of education which gives individuals a personal interest in social relationships and control, and the habits of mind which secure social changes without introducing disorder" (John Dewey, 1944, p.99).

Dewey's vision of the citizen in a democratic society was one of an interested and active participant in the society, one who is willing and able to affect necessary institutional and social changes. For the purposes of this discussion, we are concerned with the particular aspects of the social world having to do with economic choices and institutions. We will thus need to ask: What are the beliefs and behaviors one acquires and needs in order to be an effective citizen in the economic contexts of one's life?

Since economics has to do with valued choices individuals and groups make regarding the alternative uses of (scarce) resources- we might identify the various roles persons play in the more

personal choices or in the micro economic context as well as those roles and civic tasks persons play in the more socially oriented macro economic context, and from these roles, infer the beliefs and behaviors employed.

Economic roles in the Personal Context. The individual (or small group: family, peer group, for example) is the primary decision-making unit in the personal economic context. The individual, guided by personal goals, beliefs, and values, acts daily - and in many ways - in and with economic tasks, events, and problems. In reality, we may not think of these activities as "economic" - but rather as everyday, common tasks of working, buying, selling, and saving. Everyday occurrences can be analyzed for their social - political - aesthetic - psychological - or economic components - and, for our purposes in this discussion, we will emphasize the economic aspects of a citizen's personal and civic roles.

In the more personal context of life, and individual, first and perhaps foremost, is an owner and caretaker of a most precious resource - oneself and one's energy, abilities, time, and labor. As a nurturer of this human resource, one invests in oneself through education, training, and other activities. Through one's work, occupation, or career, a person strives for intrinsic satisfaction (ideally) as well as for the goods and services needed for survival. In addition to serving as a producer through one's work, one is also a consumer of goods and services, and as such, makes decisions regarding the spending, saving, and/or investing of one's resources.

While these are often thought of as adult economic tasks, fundamental socialization activities occur early in life which mediate one's ability to perform these tasks with ease, success, gratification, and with a sense of personal and civic responsibility during adolescence and in later adulthood. What are the aspects of one's socio-emotional-cognitive development which influence attitudes and behavior in the personal economic context of life? Among these are:

- the development of decision-making/problem-solving skills- which enable one to apply analytic and reflective processes to personal economic problems;

- the development of achievement motivation or personal striving behaviors which enable one to set goals and to make progress toward these;

- the development of a sense of self/self-worth/self-image;

- the development of positive expectations for the outcomes of one's behavior and healthy explanations for one's successes and failures;

- the development of one's personal interests and goals;

- the development of conceptual knowledge about one's economic world and the ability to retrieve, comprehend, assess, and synthesize information;

- the development of work values; and

- the development of imagination, creativity, and flexibility which inform problem-solving and the identification of new solutions.

Economic roles in the Social Context. The individual, in collaboration with others in a neighborhood, community, nation, or international community is the basic decision-making unit for economic problems occurring in the social context of life. What civic tasks are demanded of the individual and what economic roles are played? The individual, as part of a group in a democracy, acts to establish economic goals (for the community, nation, etc.) and to monitor the group's progress toward those goals by assessing current events and issues and regulating action when necessary. The individual/groups also acts as a caretaker/preserver of community resources and continually engages in decisions on the alternative uses of these collectively-owned resources. The economic-citizen willingly and actively participates in economic issue-resolution in various appropriate forms and at the local, national, and international levels.

What are the aspects of one's socio-emotional-cognitive development which influence attitudes and behavior in this social-economic context of life? Among these are:

- the development of an interest, awareness, and conceptual knowledge of economic events and issues;

- the development of interactive and analytical problem-solving/decision-making skills;

- the development of moral perspectives and skills including those of role-taking;

- the development of attitudes of economic/political empowerment or expectations that one's actions prompt changes,

that the political-economic system is responsive to individuals and groups;

- and the development of imagination and creativity which aid in the identification of new alternatives.

What do we know about the development of these socio-emotional-cognitive factors in terms of one's economic socialization? What are young adolescents like - in terms of these abilities, attitudes, and knowledge? What implications might we draw from the literature to inform curriculum development in Citizenship Education?

I shall attempt to answer these questions in this paper. In this introductory section, I've identified the "ideal" set of political-economic skills, knowledge, and attitudes demanded of young citizens in the complex contemporary world. In the next section, the discussion turns to a conceptualization of economic socialization, followed in the third section by a discussion of economic socialization for civic behavior in the personal context. The development of economic knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for citizen behavior in the social context is addressed in the concluding section, with the emphasis here on psychological factors. Particular attention is given throughout to the young adolescent.

A PERSPECTIVE ON ECONOMIC SOCIALIZATION

Economic socialization is a life-long, complex, interactional, and multi-disciplinary set of processes. It has to do not only with the development of the socio-emotional-cognitive factors identified already in this paper, but also with the development of ideological beliefs about our own economic system and that of other societies and about our individual roles within the economy. Some of these ideological, cognitive, emotional elements result from direct instruction, purposeful shaping, or carefully-selected modeling of the "proper" beliefs and behaviors. However, the factors which influence socialization may also be less direct - actually, they may be hidden or unconscious or perhaps unintended messages or actions by significant others or by aspects of the society.

Parents, the family, peers, teachers, the media, the formal and informal curricula and an endless array of real and/or imaginary people - all are socializing agents. But, socialization is not a unidirectional process: not only do significant others influence children, but they are also influenced by children and youth. In other words, there is a reciprocal or transactional relationship between and among the actors in the socialization process. In addition, the child is associated with and influenced by many overlapping units: the national and international cultures, one or more ethnic groups, the local culture, and socio-economic group(s) (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Additionally, the child is not a passive recipient of messages from the society - but

rather, actively interacts with the messages, constructing new knowledge as a function of one's prior experiences, one's evolving value and belief base, and one's cognitive capacities at any given time.

The social-political-economic context is itself dynamic and continually changing; as such, it provides an altered interactive milieu for different generations of young people. Today, there are significant changes in the social context which not only provide different socialization messages from those of a generation ago, but also require different role adaptations for involvement and participation as a citizen in the economic world. For example, there are demographic changes in family structure, including decreases in the birth rate in the U.S., and increases in the number and percentages of women in the labor force. Changes in the legal structure have minimized discrimination in many employment areas; shifts in the manufacturing/technological/agricultural profile in this and in other countries have created new issues and altered economic role expectations for the young. And, there are changes in the ideological and pragmatic economic structures of many nations as groups attempt to better adjust economic reality to goals and beliefs. All of these factors influence the economic socialization of young people growing up at any given period of time.

While the study of political socialization is a fairly well-established and well-documented field of inquiry, that of economic socialization is not. In real life, it is difficult to separate the study of economics from that of politics - and most civic

issues and aspects of life contain economic as well as political content and perspectives.

Certainly some of the same socializing factors contribute to the development of economic as well as to political ideas and abilities. And, one must employ economic and political knowledge and analysis in the study of history and current civic issues.

Yet, we have segmented and compartmentalized research on political and economic socialization. In addition, we have traditionally (at least in the last 50 years) separated these fields for instructional purposes. One might ask why this has occurred and if this research and pedagogical isolation of economics from political science is desirable for the future.

Studies of economic socialization should contribute to understanding why and how certain attitudes and behaviors develop in individuals and groups, not merely document what these patterns and differences are. Much of the current research is of a descriptive, psychological nature. This in a good beginning - but consideration must also be given to the contextual factors which influence the development of certain psychological attributes if we are to understand causal relationships in economic socialization.

Let us turn now to examine some of the research which illuminates our understanding of economic socialization of individuals in the personal context of their lives.

ECONOMIC SOCIALIZATION IN THE PERSONAL CONTEXT: IN SEARCH OF A PARADIGM

How, from whom, and in what ways do people learn the economic knowledge, skills, and beliefs they use in their everyday lives? Currently, no field of inquiry exists to investigate this question systematically, and no coherent body of literature called "economic socialization" literature exists, either. Neither are there theoretical perspectives to guide such a proposed field of inquiry. What does exist are studies which provide clues and possible directions for work in theory-building. The research I've examined is drawn from a number of related fields: the work on the role of the family from social-psychologists studying child development or the social structure of families; some of the research on work comes from vocational psychologists; some of the research on schools and society comes from the work of anthropologists or political scientists.

Most of the literature which might contribute to our understanding of economic socialization factors which prepare young people for personal economic choices has to do with the topic of work: attitudes about work, vocational/career choices, work skills, perceptions about education and work, and factors influencing gender, ethnic, and socio-economic differences regarding work. The family, school, and society in general are often examined for causal relationships to adolescent beliefs about work and work habits.

The relationship between education and one's status and income has been reemphasized lately through such reports as A

Nation at Risk by the National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983). In a study of over 300 ninth graders and over 270 twelfth graders from two high schools - one situated in a middle -to-upper middle class professional setting, and the other in a lower-middle to middle class setting - Nicholls, Patashnick, and Nolen (1985) recently found consistent but disturbing patterns in high school students' views about what the aims of education should be, and their own personal goals in school. Of four major purposes of schooling (wealth and status, commitment to society, understanding the world, and achievement motivation), those who chose wealth and status as the primary orientation were more likely to be academically alienated and were least likely to associate with a commitment to learning, satisfaction with learning in school, and plans to attend college. Belief that success in the world would depends on beating or surpassing others, impressing the "right people" and so on, was associated with (a) the view that school should help one gain wealth and status; and (b) personal goals in the classroom of avoiding work, easy success without effort, and on demonstrating high ability.

This research does not explore the causal factors underlying such belief patterns, which would allow better understanding not only of the derivation of such attitudes, but also of the meanings and effects these belief patterns hold for adolescent behavior. There is a considerable body of literature, however, on the role of the family in the development of work-related beliefs and choices; much of this work considers the changing social context of the family as an important factor in the economic socialization

of adolescents with regard to their work-related beliefs and choices. What follows is not intended to be a comprehensive and convincing summary of the research on economic socialization by the family. Again, that body of work does not exist. Rather, the studies I've selected provide clues about factors important in the economic socialization of young people, and identify variables which might aid in theory-building or in further empirical work in this field.

The family and work. A major societal change over the last 20 years has been the increasing participation of women in the outside-of-home labor force. What are the effects of maternal employment on adolescent beliefs and choices regarding work? The effects seem to be most pronounced in regard to the daughters of employed mothers:

> "The most consistent and well-documented correlate of career orientation and departure from traditional feminine roles is maternal employment during childhood and adolescence. Daughters of employed mothers (i.e., mothers who were employed during some period of the daughter's childhood or adolescence) more often aspire to a career outside the home (Almquist & Angrist, 1971; Hoffman, 1974, 1979; Stein, 1973); get better grades in school (Nichols & Schauffer, 1975); and aspire to more advanced education (Hoffman, 1974; Stein, 1973)." (Vondracek & Lerner, 1982, p. 611).

There are some data to suggest that children of employed mothers have more egalitarian sex-role concepts than do children of non-employed-outside of the home mothers (Gold and Andres, 1978). Girls seem to benefit from independence training and the modeling of achievement striving a working mother provides. Girls of working mothers also tend to be more outgoing, independent, more highly motivated, and tend to score higher on achievement

tests than do girls of non-working (outside of the home) mothers (Hoffman, 1979). Farel's (1980) study of kindergarten children and their mothers raises the issue and relevance of a mother's desire to work: she found that children of mothers whose attitudes toward work and work behavior were congruent (i.e., wanted to work and were working - or did not want to work and were not working) scored significantly higher on several measures of adjustment and competence than did children of mothers whose behavior and attitudes were not congruent. Farel's study presents a more comprehensive way to examine the effects of family structure on child socialization, and this study provides clues for adolescent studies.

Mothers who work for wages also tend to encourage in their children those behaviors they perceive as adaptive in their own jobs. For example, if good grammar and certain social skills are important for the mother in her job, then she will tend to model and emphasize these behaviors for her children (Piotrkowski & Katz, 1982).

Pervasive and persistent traditional sex-role expectations were found by Peterson, Rollins, Thomas and Heaps (1982) in their study of 96 families, each having both a male and a female adolescent. Results of their study indicate that family decisions favor the career goals of adolescent males over adolescent females by a 4 to 1 ratio. That is, the differential preference given to adolescents' goals seem to be determined by the adolescents' gender. This variable retained its explanatory value despite analyses for the effects of alternative variables such as the

employment status of mothers, education or income of fathers, and whether the daughters desired an occupational or homemaking career. Fathers also tended to prefer domestic goals for their daughters more than the adolescent females chose these goals for themselves.

Family beliefs may influence not only role expectations for career choices but also other aspects of civic behavior. For example, Block (1973) shows that at least one measure of psychosocial functioning - the presence of a principled level of moral learning - is associated with less traditional sex-role definitions. That is, the flexibility associated with less rigid gender roles may also enable greater role-taking ability on other issues.

Society and work-related roles/expectations. If one views gender-related economic roles as adaptive to socio-cultural changes, then one would expect to find work role expectations changing as the society evolves. In Block's (1973) study of six countries (Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, England, and the United States, she found marked cross cultural consistency in sex-role economic expectations within each culture. Of the university students who comprised Block's sample, in four out of six cultural groups, both males and females within and across cultures agreed that males are higher than females in being practical, shrewd, assertive, competitive, critical, and self-controlled. In at least four of the six cultural groups, males and females within and across cultures agreed that females are higher than males in being loving, affectionate, impulsive, sympathetic, and generous.

In the U.S. sample, Block (1973) reported that students' ratings of parental child-rearing practices differed from those of students in the European samples. In the U.S., significantly greater emphasis was placed on early and clear sex typing and on competitive achievement, and less importance was placed on the control of aggression in males. Block explains these findings in the context of sociocultural forces acting in the various societies. The U.S. is the "most capitalistic" of the countries in this sample and one would expect to find child-rearing practices (socialization) to be reflective of the adaptive needs of the sociocultural-historical pressures for role performance in the society.

Kandel and Lesser's study (1972) of adolescents in the United States and Denmark also illuminates within culture consistency and between culture differences on some factors which have relevance for economic socialization. One major difference between American and Danish values is associated with achievement: Americans emphasize achievement more than do Danes. Americans emphasize getting somewhere, establishing oneself, and thus gaining the respect of the community. A much larger percentage of American than Danish parents and adolescents emphasize being a leader, earning money, and having a good reputation. In addition, the majority of American parents and adolescents believe that the best way to get ahead in life is to work hard, a belief maintained only by a very small minority of Danes, who, in contrast, emphasize getting along with others as the best way to get ahead in life.

Reminiscent of the Nicholls, Patashnick and Nolen study cited earlier, Kandel and Lesser also found that in the U.S., parents and adolescents are less concerned with the intrinsic gratification of doing satisfying work than they are with the extrinsic rewards of work. This attitude also is true for the American adolescents in this study, in terms of academic concerns. That is, American high school students want good grades in order to get the rewards these grades bring, i.e., admission to college and to a desirable career (Kandel and Lesser, 1972).

Does this relationship between expectations of good grades in school and "success" in the world of work hold for all groups in our society? Do all adolescents strive for academic achievement? Obviously not. The drop-out rates, especially in major urban areas of the U.S. approximate 20-40+%, with large percentages of these students coming from minority groups. Achievement scores by blacks and other minority groups have historically been lower than have those for whites. So called "solutions" have traditionally attempted to "fix the students" or "fix the schools."

John Ogbu, an anthropologist from Nigeria, offers an alternative perspective on this issue in his book, Minority Education and Caste (1978). Ogbu's argument is structural rather than psychological: he proposes that equal educational opportunity will be effective only if there is a comparable posteducational opportunity to compete for adult roles on equal terms:

> Specifically, the ability of a group of people to maximize their cognitive and academic skills depends on the opportunity they have to use these skills in the world of work. In a technological and money-oriented society

> like the United States, a lack of opportunity to perform highly skilled jobs stunts the development of such skills. Furthermore, the absence of such an opportunity for any group deprives its members of their sense of self-worth, frustrates their efforts to improve themselves, and ruins their ability to maintain normal family life and raise their children adequately. Eliminating the job ceiling will improve the economic status of black families, reduce the blight and social pathologies of their communities, improve their general health and nutritional level, increase their belief that they can succeed in American Society by individual initiative and hard work, enable them to raise their children to be more successful in school, and enable black children to develop more fully those skills needed for school learning (Ogbu, 1978, p.364).

Apart from this, Ogbu suggests there is still a need to study and eliminate the many subtle ways in which schools exclude minority groups from effective education.

Schools and work. Undoubtedly, teachers, the overt curriculum, and the hidden messages of school organization and the curriculum provide economic socializing messages for children about the nature of work and their roles within the economy. Using ethnographic techniques of participant observation and interview, Anyon (1980) studied pedagogical and pupil evaluation techniques in five elementary schools - each situated in a different socio-economic setting - as she examined classrooms in light of a theoretical approach to social class. Anyon defines one's social class as the way the person relates to the process in society by which goods, services, and culture are produced. Through (primarily) one's work, one has a relationship to the system of ownership, to other people (at work and in society), and to the content and process of one's own productive activity (Anyon, 1980, p. 68).

In her observations, Anyon asks: What potential

relationships to the system of ownership, to authority and control, and to their own productive activity are being developed in children in each school? And, what economically relevant knowledge, skills, and predispositions are being transmitted in each classroom?

Anyon finds distinct differences in the lives of teachers and students in the various fifth grade classes; on the basis of these differences, Anyon concludes that children in the "working class" school are developing a potential conflict relationship with capital: their rote school work is appropriate for future wage labor that is mechanical and routine; the children, though, are developing abilities and skills of resistance, which are ultimately debilitating, Anyon proposes, not only as they inhibit current learning but also future production. In the "executive elite" school, by contrast, students are granted a great deal of personal independence in the classroom and have daily opportunities to learn and utilize intellectually and socially prestigious knowledge and skills. "Their schooling is helping them to develop the abilities necessary for ownership and control of physical capital and the means of production in society" (Anyon, 1980, p. 89).

Closing comments. The studies presented in this section are included to help us raise questions regarding the nature of economic socialization of young people. What are the various outcomes of economic socialization? What knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values are developed? What aspects and agents of

society act in the socialization process - and in what overt and covert ways does this process occur? What messages are transmitted consciously and unconsciously to young people? And, what ideological messages are promoted? Also, what relationships are there between the knowledge, skills, and values one develops and uses in one's personal economic life and those used in the civic-economic context of life?

To answer these questions, theoretical constructs and empirical research are needed. These advances should aid in our understanding of ourselves as a society and should inform us as we ask: What are our goals for the economic socialization of young people? And, are our practices congruent with these goals?

ECONOMIC SOCIALIZATION IN THE CIVIC CONTEXT: IN SEARCH OF A PARADIGM

Young adolescents - while still intimately involved with family and peers - are also developing a new awareness of social institutions and new interests in the workings of the society at large. They have had countless economic experiences and have developed ideas about the ways our own economy works; they are also developing ideas about right and wrong, and are beginning to articulate their own positions on social-economic issues. The transition to adolescence requires a perspective on collective social realities, and the social-economic - legal/political systems become matters of major concern to the young adolescent.

What do we know about the development of adolescent cognition about the social-economic world? How does one's experience result in knowledge? How does knowledge relate to thinking and problem solving on economic - political issues? And, what is the relationship of moral cognition to moral action on economic/political problems? Again, there is no widely-accepted coherent theoretical explanation for integrating these cognitive and moral development, social-problem solving, and social action constructs.

There are, however, some recent theoretical efforts to link certain of these components in new, integrated, and promising ways (Blasi, 1980; Fischer, 1980). And, there is a considerable body of cognitive and moral developmental literature which holds implications for understanding some aspects of economic thought and behavior. There even is some economics - specific empirical work to draw on in this area, although the research on adolescent

economic thought and problem-solving is seriously limited.

In this section, I will draw on this social psychological literature to identify what is generally known about the capabilities which are important to adolescent civic behavior; in addition, the economics - specific research will be emphasized. Among those social-emotional-cognitive factors identified as important for economic-civic behavior are: civic action, role-taking, economic knowledge development and problem-solving skills. While these are not the only important factors, they are among the most important, and they are also among the most commonly investigated.

Civic Action. In Piagetian terms (Inhelder & Piaget, 1958), by adolescence, most young people have shifted from concrete to formal operational cognitive thought and to a more autonomous level of morality (Kohlberg, 1976). According to these stage theories of development, several factors emerge during adolescence which enable students to better understand and to be more willing to act upon issues in the social-political-economic world (Charles & Boyes, 1982; Neimark, 1982). Merelman (1971) has identified two moral developmental and four cognitive developmental factors which he proposes are integral to policy thinking and to civic action which are important components of adolescent growth:

a) the development of a relativistic sense of morality which leads the adolescent to question the existing social order and which may lead to political social action;

b) the development of respect for the importance of social organization which helps the adolescent realize that one source of

personal unhappiness may lie in the social system itself - beyond any one individual's control. This, too, may lead the adolescent into political-economic activity intended to change the social system;

c) the growth of causal understanding. By early adolescence, one normally develops the capacity to connect chains of events in a logical manner (Flavell, 1977; Sedlak & Kurtz, 1981). Erwin and Kuhn (1979) report that no children younger than those in 8th grade were able to recognize that human action could be determined by more than a single causal factor. This ability means that the adolescent can develop reasonable explanations for events and can realize that events can be controlled;

d) the development of hypothetical thought occurs during adolescence and is also thought to be a precursor to political action. Through hypothetical thought, adolescents can imagine a socio-economic world constructed differently from the existing one - and can actively engage in If...then thinking sequences. Being able to imagine how things might be changed may act as a stimulus for political action;

e) the development of role-taking skills which enable the adolescent to identify with others and to see issues from the perspective of other points of view (Higgins, 1980; Kurdek, 1978);

f) the development of better understanding of the linkage of interrelationships between and among events within the social-economic system. This ability allows adolescents to see how events affect themselves as well as other persons (Merelman, 1971).

The fact that these cognitive and moral factors are maturing during adolescence and the hypothesis that these factors should enable the young person to engage in active civic behavior (on economic issues) may be a necessary but not sufficient explanation of economic civic behavior. While the intellectual tools may be ready, whether adolescents are actively interested in socio-economic problems, and whether they actually become actively involved in some way, is probably a function of such factors as the values for civic involvement held by the adolescent's family and peer group, the opportunities for involvement open to the student, and the various combinations of psychodynamic and personal factors that influence one's choice of conduct in the world (Merelman, 1971).

In an empirical test of his proposed model, Merelman (1971) surveyed the attitudes of 40 middle class 8th and 12th grade students on the economic topic of poverty. He found that almost all of the students thought that poverty was "wrong" and that it should be "corrected". The younger students thought the best "correction" was through gift-giving to the poor, while the older students could identify longer-range political solutions. The younger students could see little or no relationship between poverty and themselves while the older students felt that poverty had direct consequences for everyone in society. Regardless of age, some of the adolescents could identify multiple causes of poverty and multiple effects, and some could apply hypothetical thinking and imagine a world without poverty.

Three questions come to mind: a) how generalizable are the formal operational abilities to individual adolescents? b) what role might task-specific knowledge (in this case, about poverty) play in the understanding and analysis of this and other economic issues? and c) what role does perspective-taking ability play in the analysis of economic topics such as poverty?

On the first question, within Piaget's framework, cognitive development virtually ends with formal operations. It is generally assumed that adolescents have fully achieved formal operations, and there is nothing more to do but to extend their thinking to new content areas (Piaget, 1972). While this seems to be a less than satisfactory explanation, there have been no major alternative explanations which might provide a refinement of formal operational thinking. In addition, there is sufficient documentation to note a wide range of within-age cognitive variation (Barenboim, 1977; Peel, 1971; Turiel, 1983). Thus, one's ability to make blanket descriptions of the adolescent population or of any particular individual's cognitive capabilities on the basis of the theory alone is limited. Fischer (1980) proposes that many of the age differences arise because different tasks (different socio-economic issues, for example) require different levels of abstraction and students may or may not have had the prior experiences, the knowledge, and the skills necessary to deal with such abstractions.

Let us take a closer look at the other two questions raised here - those having to do with role-taking and the role of economic knowledge.

Role-taking. Conflict and issue resolution in a multi-value society demands complex cognitive analysis. In order to fully understand and then analyze most economic-political problems, the individual must be able to comprehend the problems from the value positions of other groups which oppose or support one's own position (Oliver, 1968). The ability of social perspective taking or role-taking has long been viewed as a goal of social studies education and an integral part of issue analysis. Role-taking is the cognitive realization of another's point of view or the ability to place "yourself in someone else's shoes."

The question is: is role-taking an ability in its own right which follows its own developmental path, beginning with an "egocentric viewpoint" and progressing to the stage of social and conventional system role-taking (Piaget, 1972; Selman, 1976)? Or, is role-taking a multi-dimensional construct one uses throughout life which draws upon social information normally embedded within specific social tasks? The weight of the empirical evidence supports this latter view that role-taking is a frequently used process of considering perspectives other than one's own and is not a general ability that children "acquire."

What, then, are the various facets of perspective - taking? a) The ability to consider multiple elements in a problem; b) the ability to "control the self" and the self's own perspective when considering a problem (Higgins, 1980); and c) the various ways and the skills involved with the processing of information while making role-taking inferences (Kurdek, 1978).

There are two major implications of this view on role-taking for curriculum development:

a) How well one performs role-taking on any given occasion is a function of the particular conceptual abilities and knowledge related to the task or issue at hand rather than related to a general perspective-taking competence. Social economic perspective taking is thus determined by the degree of knowledge of the issues involved in the economic problem, the degree of knowledge of persons or roles one needs to take and the various beliefs associated with those roles, and knowledge of self and one's own perspective on the issue. One improves in role-taking, then, as one's knowledge of situations and one's conceptual knowledge improves. Thus, the development of knowledge about particular economic issues is important to role-taking effectiveness.

b) Role-taking development should be viewed as continuous. The qualitative changes which occur do so with respect to other conceptual achievements. Developmental changes in role taking are more on the order of how often and how comprehensively one considers the perspective of others. Thus, practice with role-taking on a range of economic issues is important.

Economic Knowledge. If economic knowledge is important for role-taking and thus for civic analysis of economic issues, let's look at what we know about the development of economic knowledge and the particular characteristics of economic knowledge which pose instructional problems.

Much of the work on the identification of the economic content of childrens' thought is focused on young children. The topic of children's ideas about money seems to dominate the early literature, which, for the most part is atheoretical and probes only the most surface of knowledge (Armento, 1986b).

The work of Hans Furth (1980) provides a theoretical context within which to frame some of the studies which offer little explanatory value themselves. Furth, a student of Piaget, interviewed 195 children, ages 5-11 from southern England on economic and other societal topics. From the responses, Furth developed a model proposing the developmental pattern youngsters demonstrate in their ideas about the (economic) social system:

Stage I: Personalistic Elaborations and Absence of Interpretive System

Stage II: Understanding of First-Order Societal Functions

Stage III: Part-Systems in Conflict

Stage IV: A Concrete-Systematic Framework

The youngest children in Furth's study (1980), ages 5-6, showed a great deal of playfulness and inventiveness in their "make-believe" like explanations of the source of money. They thought that the change you received from your purchases at a store was the primary source of money. That is, "you go to a store to get money." In 1988, children of this age in the U.S. think that money comes from banking machines.

Children of approximately 6-8 years of age demonstrated Furth's second stage of thought, the understanding of first order societal functions. That is, they could identify the role of money as a means of exchange, but had no idea what happened to the

money once the shopkeeper took it. These young children were also playful with their stories about money.

By stage III, though, this playful attitude seemed to recede as children began to see inconsistencies in their thinking. By ages 8-10, most of the children were able to go beyond a surface explanation of the role of money, but they were unable to identify multiple reasons/causes for events.

The oldest children in Furth's study, ages 9-11 - the preadolescents - demonstrated responses indicative of the proposed fourth stage, that of a concrete systematic framework. These children were the most reflective and logical in their descriptions and interpretations of social events, yet their explanations were highly concrete and limited by their experiences. Children at this fourth stage of social thought fully understood the role of money in exchange and the idea of production costs and profit, but had little understanding of the role of government in the economy or of the "macro" economy at all (Furth, 1980).

While Furth did not include young adolescents in this study, we know from other research that at the next level of sophistication, young people are able to assume a more symbolic form of thought, that is they become less dependent on concrete experiences as the basis of thought and can make abstractions based on verbal experiences. While this more formal thought by the emerging adolescent is qualitatively different from that of the concrete operational child, the thought of the adolescent is based upon and is derived from concrete operations. This notion

has curriculum implications for young adolescents, especially for those who have a weak experiential base as well as for those who demonstrate less than formal operational thought for economic topics and issues: that is, instruction should begin with and build upon concrete and visual representations of the economic topics/concepts/issues under discussion in order to promote a maximum level of comprehension and eventual analysis of these ideas.

In studies by Schug (1981) and Schug and Birkey (1985), patterns of economic thought were found which are compatible with the Furth/Piaget proposed stages of social thought. In the Schug and Birkey study (1985), young children were interviewed on the economic concepts of scarcity, choice, opportunity cost, and monetary value.

In Armento's study 355 children ages 3-16 (1982), most children ages 5-7 recognized and could respond logically to economic questions such as "How do you make decision with your own money?" "Do people have everything they want?" and "Why do people work?" The responses of the youngest children reflected tautological thinking (yes, people have everything they want because they always do"); inaccurate or moralistic thinking ("no, people do not have everything they want, because Jesus don't want them to"). By age 7, though, most of the children were responding with "reasonable, accurate, and logical" explanations to these questions.

On questions having to do with topics such as taxes and international trade, however, the shift from naive to more

informed responses generally occurred between the ages of 10-12. Even though most children have had indirect experiences with taxes through payments of sales taxes for their purchases and through hearing parental conversations about taxes, most young people in this study responded that they "didn't know" what taxes were or why we paid them. It appears that in this case, the child's experiences were neither frequent nor focused enough to serve as adequate data for the child's spontaneous concept generation.

The emphasis of the studies cited in this section is primarily on the economic concepts children develop mainly through their own mental efforts, rather than through formal instruction. In all cases, age-related patterns of thought were identified, and the concept response patterns were congruent with Piagetian theory. That is, economic concept development responses seem to progress from concrete to more abstract; from inconsistent and narrow to consistent, flexible and more accurate; and from tautological, literal and rule-oriented to more generalizable (Armento, 1986).

In an empirical study intended to explore the values and beliefs of elementary and high school students, Cummings and Taebel (1978) explored economic socialization from a Neo-Marxist theoretical approach. Neo-Marxists argue that school children learn models of the social world favorable to the development and perpetuation of inequality. Cummings and Taebel contend that, since inequality is "a natural and inevitable outcome of a capitalist economy, ideas endorsing and legitimating such a process ar integral to its existence and perpetuation" (p. 209).

Their data does not show a direct relationship between economic socialization or youngster's prior ideas and the actual maintenance of "corporate capitalism", but they do show "strong support for the idea that economic socialization tends to legitimate the general structure of social inequality in American life, and thus contribute to the perpetuation of prevailing economic arrangements" (p. 209).

In this study, questions were structured around the topics of the role of trade unions, private ownership of the means of production, and the role of government intervention in the economy. On the questions about trade unions, children in grades 3 and 6 knew little or nothing about unions; students in grade 9 had some fairly specific ideas about trade unions. Fifty-four percent of the responses by ninth graders presented negative evaluations of unions, including comments such as: "They ask for too much; then the manufacturers have to raise the price and the people can't afford to buy things anymore." "If a union insists that they get paid a whole lot, it can be worse for people."

By twelfth grade, sixty percent of the responses showed a negative evaluation of trade unions, with these assessments focused on the ideas that trade unions are too big, too powerful, and jeopardize social stability.

Students in this study were asked to explain the differences between "free enterprise, socialism and communism"; by 9th grade, students began to express the idea that private ownership and productivity were necessary and inseparable parts of any smoothly functioning economy and that freedoms were limited under socialism

and communism (which were seen as interchangeable concepts). By 12th grade, students saw socialism and communism as unworkable systems and felt that these two systems were in direct opposition to individual prosperity, fulfillment and success.

On the role of government, many young children in the 3rd and 6th grades thought that the government "owns the banks", "determines prices of goods", "controls money", and "should do more to help poor people." Even some of the 9th graders held some of these erroneous notions about the role of government in the setting of prices, owning of banks, etc. But, by 12th grade, the role of the government, at least with regard to banking, was somewhat more accurate, but still not very complete. The older students tended to view government intervention in social economic affairs as a potential threat to self-interest.

What are we to think about the results of the Cummings and Taebel study? Well, we might start out with a few more questions: Are these findings truly representative of the economic knowledge and belief of young people? Are these "good and complete" ideas we think young students should possess? Is something missing? If so, what? What economic knowledge - and in what forms - is useful for ordinary life and for the solving of economic - political issues? What economic knowledge should be taught? How should alternative ideological perspectives be treated?

For at least the last twenty years in the U.S., the dominant approach to the teaching of economics has been the key social sciences concepts/generalization approach (Armento, 1986a), with not much (if any) attention given to the ideological assumptions

made by this selection as opposed to some other approach. There is not sufficient space within this paper to explore the issues implied by the selection of any one approach to knowledge, but at least we should be aware that the omissions and commissions of the curriculum choices we make are in and of themselves agents of socialization.

I'd like to raise two further points about economic knowledge before discussing problem-solving. First, from an historical perspective, the formal study of economics in the U.S. can be traced to 1819 when John McVickar was made professor of moral philosophy and political economy at Columbia College, New York (Monroe, 1911). Political economy soon made its way into high schools via the "Problems of Democracy" course, but the issue of the separate or integrated attention which should be given to the study of economics and of political science has been debated (sometimes hotly) since the NEA Committee on Social Studies made its 1916 report. While this issue is relevant for us today, the debate has been barely warm.

The second point I'd just like to raise has to do with the difficulty levels of many economic concepts, especially those which are used in the analysis of macro/national or international issues such as aggregate supply and demand, fiscal and monetary policies, absolute and comparative advantage. All of these - as well as many other economic concepts (scarcity, opportunity cost, markets, demand, supply, price, and so on) are relational concepts. That is, they are defined by establishing a relationship between at least two separate ideas; for example,

demand has to do with relationships between price and quantities demanded. We know from a long and respected tradition of research on concept learning that relational concepts are the most difficult of all types to learn (Clark, 1971) and to teach.

Failure to consider the difficulty levels of economic knowledge alongside the anticipated cognitive competence of the student population can only lead to frustrated teachers and learners - as well as to the further development of misconceptions about the economic world.

Problem-Solving. Citizenship education has as its core decision-making/problem-solving and civic action. What do we know about "solving" economic - political problems? First, in the context of social problems, the word "solving" cannot be taken to mean "ending" a problem but, more likely the taking of steps from here to a "better" there or the rendering of steps to make the condition "not a problem." As individuals, communities, a nation, and a global community, we are continually faced with economic issues that demand reflection, understanding, analysis, and action. How shall we go about enabling young adolescents to be better social problem solvers?

Research on teaching thinking and problem solving is at its most exciting point in history right now! And, there is active research in problem solving in almost every area of the curriculum except in social studies! Much of the current work is drawn from a cognitive psychology perspective; the major emphasis or approaches are a) studies of individuals who are experts in particular domains. This work emphasizes the role of domain-specific knowledge, and b) studies emphasizing general strategic or metacognitive knowledge - or the ability to learn new information and to monitor one's current levels of proficiency (Bransford, et. al., 1986).

To be an expert is not to suggest that students are to become mini-economists or mini-political scientists, but rather that they become better problem-solvers, better able to understand their social world, its economic-political problems, and better able to act on these issues in responsible ways. There are several major

characteristics which distinguish relative experts from relative novices in any area:

a) Complexity of skills. The expert social problem solver would possess skills appropriate for responding to more and to different kinds of information.

b) Amount of knowledge. Expert problem solvers possess meaningful bodies of interconnected knowledge; new knowledge is grasped and retained more easily by the expert because s/he is building a strong conceptual body of useful ideas, and the new knowledge is easily incorporated.

The proper role of knowledge in the social studies program has long been a source of controversy. Some leaders in the field have promoted the notion of reflective thinking and citizen education as though these were content-less processes. There is no controversy, though regarding the integral and important role domain-specific knowledge plays in problem-solving from the perspective of current research (see Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1986; Bransford, Sherwood, Vye, & Rieser, 1986; Voss, Tyler, & Yengo, 1983).

c) Knowledge structure. Experts not only know more, but their knowledge is organized in more coherent and usable ways. Causal, relational, and hierarchical patterns of conceptual thought are most evident (Voss, Tyler, & Yengo, 1983).

d) Problem representation. Experts can respond to the abstract nature of problems and can sort out the various approaches for solving the problem (Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1986).

The work on metacognition examines how people use what they know to access task-relevant information to solve problems. Please consult the review by Bransford, Sherwood, Vye, Rieser (1986) for a summary of the work in problem-solving and in metacognition and their reference list for further reading. While most of the research is being conducted in the domains of mathematics, reading, and science - there is every expectation that this work is important for social studies educators interested in civic problem solving - and the role of economic and political science knowledge in citizenship education for the 21st century.

Summary. Since you will have a copy of this paper prior to the conference, I'd ask that we try something a little unorthodox at this point. I'd like you to play an active role in the summary.

- What implications do you draw from this presentation for curriculum development?
- What are the most pressing research needs, as suggested by the paper? and
- What new issues have been raised for you?

I'll bring my own summary to Washington and we'll compare our mental constructions then.

REFERENCES

Almquist, E.M. & Anqrist, S.S. (1971). Role model influences on college women's career aspirations. Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 17, 263-279.

Anyon, J. (1980). Social class and the hidden curriculum of work. Journal of Education. 162, 69-92.

Armento, B.J. (1982). Awareness of economic knowledge: A developmental study. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York.

Armento, B.J. (1986a). Promoting economic literacy. In Wronski, S. and Bragow, D. (Eds.). Social Studies and Social Sciences: A Fifty Year Perspective. Wash., D.C.: National Council for the Social Studies.

Armento, B.J. with Flores, S. (1986b). Learning about the economic world. In Atwood, V.A. (Ed.). Elementary School Social Social Studies: Research as a Guide to Practice. Wash., D.C.: National Council for the Social Studies.

Bandura, A. & Schunk, D.H. (1981). Cultivating competence, self-efficacy, and intrinsic interest through proximal self-motivation. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 41, 586-598.

Barenboim, C. (1977). Developmental changes in the interpersonal cognitive system from middle childhood to adolescence. Child Development, 48, 1467-1474.

Bereiter, C. & Scardamalia, M. (1986). Educational relevance of the study of expertise. Interchange, 17 (2), 10-18.

Blasi, A. (1980). Bridging moral cognition and moral action: A critical review of the literature. Psychological Bulletin, 88, 1-45.

Block, J. H. (1973). Conceptions of sex-roles: Some cross-cultural and longitudinal perspectives. American Psychologist, 28, 512-526.

Bransford, J. Sherwood, R., Vye, N., & Rieser, J. (October 1986). Teaching thinking and problem solving. American Psychologist, 41 (10), 1078-1089.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). Contexts of child rearing: Problems and prospects. American Psychologist, 34, 844-850.

Chandler, M. & Boyes, M. (1982). Social cognitive development. In B.B. Wolman (Ed.) Handbook of Developmental Psychology. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

REFERENCES (continued)

Clark, C.D. (1971) Teaching concepts in the classroom: A set of teaching prescriptions derived from experimental research. Journal of Educational Psychology, 62, 253-278.

Cummings, S. & Taebel, D. (1978). The economic socialization of children: A Neo-Marxist analysis.

Dewey, J. (1944). Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education. New York: The Free Press.

Erwin, J. & Kuhn, D. (1979). Development of children's understanding of multiple determination underlying human behavior. Developmental Psychology, 15(3), 352-353.

Farel, A. (1980). Effects of preferred maternal roles, maternal employment, and sociodemographic status on school adjustment and competence. Child Development, 51, 1179-1186.

Fischer, K.W. (1980). A theory of cognitive development: The control and construction of hierarchies of skills. Psychological Review, 87 (6), 477-531.

Flavell, J.H. (1977). Cognitive Development, New York: Prentice-Hall.

Furth, H.G. (1980). The World of Grown-Ups: Children's conceptions of society. New York: Elsevier North Holland.

Gold, D. and Andres, D. (1978). Developmental comparisons between 10-year old children with employed and non-employed mothers. Child Development, 49, 75-84.

Higgins, E.T. (1980). Role-taking and social judgement: Alternative developmental perspectives and processes. In J.H. Flavell and L. Ross (Eds.) New Directions in the Study of Social - Cognitive Development. Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press.

Hoffman, L.W. (1974). The employment of women, education, and fertility. Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 20, 99-119.

Hoffman, L.W. (1979). Maternal employment: 1979. American Psychologist, 34, 859-865.

Inhelder, B. & Piaget, J. (1958). The growth of logical thinking form childhood to adolescence. New York: Basic Books.

Kandel D. B. & Lesser, G.S. (1972). Youth in Two Worlds. San Francisco: Jossey - Bass Inc.

Kohlberg, L. (1976) Moral stages and moralization. In T. Lickona (Ed.), Moral development and behavior: Theory, research and social issues. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Kurdek, L. (1978). Perspective taking as the cognitive basis of children's moral development: A review of the literature. Merril - Palmer Quarterly, 24, 3-28.

Liebert, R.M., Wicks-Nelson, R., & Kail, R.V. (1986). Developmental Psychology: Fourth Edition. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

Merelman, R. (1971). The development of policy thinking in adolescents. American Political Science Review, 65, 1033-1047.

Monroe, P., Ed. (1911). Economics. A Cyclopedia of Education, 2, New York: Macmillan, 387-392.

National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1983). A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform. U.S. Government Printing Office.

Neimark, E.D. (1982). Adolescent thought: Transition to formal operations. In B.B. Wolman (Ed.) Handbook of Developmental Psychology. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Nicholls, J.G., Patashnick, M. & Nolen, S.B. (1985). Adolescents' theories of education. Journal of Educational Psychology, 77 (6), 683-692.

Nichols, I.A. & Schauffer, C.B. (1975). Self-concept as a predictor of performance in college women. Paper presented at the 83rd Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, Chicago.

Ogbu, J.U. (1978). Minority education and caste: The American system in cross-cultural perspective. New York: Academic Press.

Oliver, D.W. (1968). The selection of content in the social studies. In Shaver, J.P. and Berlak, H. (Eds.). Democracy, Pluralism, and the Social Studies: Readings and Commentary. Published by Shaver & Berlak.

Peel, E.A. (1971). The nature of adolescent judgment. New York: Wiley - Interscience.

REFERENCES (continued)

Peterson, G.W., Rollins, B.C., Thomas, D.L., & Heaps, L.K. (1982). Social placement of adolescents: Sex-role influences on family decisions regarding the careers of youth. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 44, 647-658.

Piaget, J. (1972). Intellectual evolution from adolescence to adulthood. Human Development, 15, 1-12.

Piotrkowski, C.S. & Katz, M.H. (1982). Indirect socialization: The effects of mother's jobs on academic behaviors. Child Development, 53, 1520-1529.

Schug, M.C. (1981). What educational research says about the development of economic thinking. Theory and Research in Social Education, 9 (3), 25-36.

Schug, M.D. and Birkey, J. (1985). The development of children's economic reasoning. Theory and Research in Social Education, 13, (1), 31-42.

Sedlak, A.J. & Kurtz, S.T. (1981). A review of children's use of causal inference principles. Child Development, 52, 759-784.

Selman, R.L. (1976). Social - cognitive understanding: A guide to educational and clinical practice. In T. Lickona (Ed.) Moral Development and Behavior: Theory, Research, and Social Issues. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.

Stein, A.H. (1973). The effects of maternal employment and educational attainment on the sex-typed attributes of college females. Social Behavior and Personality, 1, 111-114.

Turiel, E. (1983). Domains and categories in social-cognitive development. In W. Overton (Ed.) The Relationship between Social and Cognitive-Development. Hillsdale, N.J.: Erlbaum.

Vondracek, F.W. & Lerner, R.M. (1982). Vocational role development in adolescence. in B.B. Wolman (Ed.). Handbook of Developmental Psychology. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Voss, J.F., Tyler, S.W. & Yengo, L.A. (1983). Individual differences in the solving of social science problems. In Dillon, R.F. and Schmeck, R.R. (Eds.). Individual differences in cognition. New York, Academic Press.

Weiner, B. (1982). The emotional consequences of causal attributions. In M.S. Clark & T. Fiske (Eds.) Affect and cognition: The 17th Annual Carnegie Symposium on Affect. Hilldsale, N.J.; Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.